

3 May 1957

*Handwritten signature*  
Dallas Townsend, Esq.  
Assistant Attorney General  
Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C.

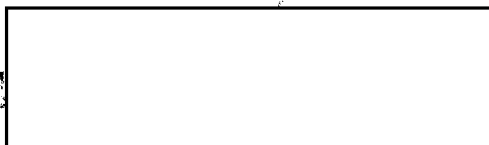
Dear Mr. Townsend:

I refer to our recent conversation with regard to the question of the release of certain property held by the Office of Alien Property and claimed by the widow and children of Count Ciano, such property representing royalties received from the publication in the United States of the Ciano Diaries.

In my letter to you of December 3, 1955, I submitted certain information with regard to the action which I took while in Switzerland in 1944-1945 as representative of OSS and Special Assistant to the American Minister at Berne.

When I acquired from Countess Ciano the photographic copy of the Ciano Diaries, which were subsequently published in the United States, I advised her that I desired the copy for the official use of the United States Government and that in giving the copy she would not prejudice any right she might have with respect to later disposition or publication of these papers. The commercial arrangements which she later made for publication were not of concern to me. In making the Diaries available to the United States Government, Countess Ciano, as best as I could judge from my conversations with her, was taking an action which she felt would be of benefit to the United States and a detriment to the Nazi forces and their allies. In any event, no commitment of any nature was given on behalf of the United States Government for the copy she furnished.

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE)



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The question of the release of the vested property involves questions of law and policy which are not within my competence. I can only state that the action you may take in this regard need not be affected one way or the other by the negotiations which I had with Countess Ciano for acquiring the copy of the Diaries for the Government, except insofar as weight may be given to the underlying motives which apparently induced Countess Ciano to make available to the United States Government certain information and material which at the time we were anxious to obtain.

I may add that the statements in the penultimate paragraph of your letter to me of November 9, 1955, are correct except that I do not recall that any official approval was given to the contracts with the Chicago Daily News to which reference is made. This was a private transaction. However, I do recall that I was quite cognizant of the fact that these arrangements were being concluded.

I return herewith the file which you left with me at the time of your recent call.

Faithfully yours,

SIGNED

Allen W. Dulles  
Director

Enclosure  
File

AWD/ji  
Distribution:  
O - Addressee  
1 - DCI  
1 - ER  
1 - Reading  
1 - OGC

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